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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 7504th meeting of the Security Council, held on 17 August 2015, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls its resolutions 2042 (2012), 2043 (2012), 2118 (2013), 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2170 (2014), 2175 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2199 (2015), and 2235 (2015) and Presidential Statements of 3 August 2011, 2 October 2013 and 24 April 2015.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria and all other States affected by the Syrian conflict, and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council stresses that the only sustainable solution to the current crisis in Syria is through an inclusive and Syrian-led political process that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people, with a view to full implementation of the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012 and, in this regard, emphasizes the urgency for all parties to work diligently and constructively towards this goal.

"The Security Council reiterates its demands as set forth in resolution 2139 that all parties cease any attacks against civilians as such, as well as any indiscriminate use of weapons in populated areas, including such use involving shelling and barrel bombs; as well as its demand for the immediate end to arbitrary detention, torture, kidnappings, abductions and forced disappearances of civilians and the immediate release of those arbitrarily detained, including journalists and humanitarian personnel; stresses the importance of implementation of such demands, in accordance with relevant provisions of international law, in creating an environment conducive to the commencement of substantive political negotiations and in building confidence among the parties; and reiterates, in this regard, that the primary responsibility to protect its population lies with the Syrian authorities.

"The Security Council expresses its gravest concern that parts of Syria are under control of terrorist groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al Nusrah Front (ANF), condemns the ongoing and multiple terrorist acts by ISIL, ANF and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaida, condemns further the targeting of civilians

based on their ethnicity, religion and/or confessional affiliations, expresses concern about the negative impact of terrorism, violent extremist ideology in support of terrorism, and action that destabilizes Syria and the region, with a devastating humanitarian impact on the civilian population, reaffirms its resolve to address all aspects of the threat, and calls on all parties to commit to putting an end to terrorist acts perpetrated by ISIL, ANF and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaida.

"The Security Council commends the Special Envoy for his efforts in convening the Geneva consultations, from April to June 2015, with a broad range of stake-holders with respect to the crisis in Syria as part of the effort to operationalize the 2012 Geneva Communiqué.

"The Security Council supports the approach set out by the Special Envoy that in order to work towards political negotiations and a political transition based on the Geneva Communiqué, four thematic areas need to be addressed through more focused consultations and discussions with the Syrian parties in four thematic working groups: safety and protection for all; political and legal issues; military, security and counterterrorism issues; and continuity of public services and reconstruction and development.

"The Security Council urges all parties to engage in good faith in the efforts of the Special Envoy, through his good offices, and to continue consultations and thematic discussions, and notes that these efforts can build on recent initiatives, including the meetings in Moscow, Cairo, Paris and Astana.

"The Security Council demands that all parties work urgently towards the comprehensive implementation of the Geneva Communiqué, aimed at bringing an end to all violence, violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law and the launching of a Syrian-led political process leading to a political transition that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people and enables them independently and democratically to determine their future, including through the establishment of an inclusive transitional governing body with full executive powers, which shall be formed on the basis of mutual consent while ensuring continuity of governmental institutions.

"The Security Council welcomes the Secretary-General's statement of 29 July 2015 that there can be no military solution to the Syrian conflict, and reiterates its endorsement of a political solution through implementation of the Geneva Communiqué.

"The Security Council stresses that rapid progress on a political solution should include full participation by all segments of Syrian society, including women, and represents the only sustainable way to resolve the situation in Syria peacefully.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need for robust international and regional assistance in support of the Special Envoy's efforts.

"The Security Council expresses grave alarm that the Syrian crisis has become the largest humanitarian emergency crisis in the world today, threatening peace and security in the region, and that at least 250,000 have

been killed, including well over 10,000 children, and 12 million people have been forced to flee their homes, including over 4 million who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, and more than 12.2 million people in Syria require urgent humanitarian assistance. In this regard, the Security Council recalls its decision as set forth in resolution 2165 (2014) that all Syrian parties to the conflict shall enable the immediate and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance directly to people throughout Syria.

"The Security Council recalls the need for all parties to respect the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian emergency assistance.

"The Security Council requests that the Secretary-General report back to the Security Council on the results of the next phase of consultations within 90 days."